

Greatness of Mind,
PROMOTED BY
CHRISTIANITY.

In a LETTER to a Friend.

The First Part.

L O N D O N,

Printed by *Edward Jones*, for *John*
-Taylor at the *Ship* in *St. Paul's*
Church-yard. M D C X C I.

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To my honoured Friend Sir R. M.

SIR,

I Do not wonder, that a great Soul, like yours, should enquire, What aspect Religion, and particularly that of Christians, has upon *Greatness of Mind*: But, I confess, I somewhat marvel, that you should be put upon the Enquiry, by the Suggestions of such a Libertine as Mr. N. N.'s confidently pretending, that his Atheistical and Sensual Principles are much more friendly, than the Doctrines of Christianity, to a noble Frame of Mind. Wherefore I dare not permit the Sense I have of my own Weakness, how great and just soever, to keep me from presenting you with my Thoughts; and the rather, because I presume you are not indisposed to receive a Satisfaction in this Point, since you seem to expect

it from a Pen that is no better than mine; which, you well know, must not be, on this occasion, assisted by the Arguments and Ornaments, that the fine Sentences of the Fathers, and other Divines and Humanists, might afford to a Person that were at leisure, and furnished with a Library. Yet I shall not much, either excuse, or deplore, my being so ill accommodated for the Task you impose upon me; because as you seem to desire but my own Thoughts, so I know not, whether common Place-books would afford me any great Assistance on so uncommon a Theme; and, I confess, that, when the Matter will bear it, I, as well as you, do less care for Authorities, especially taken from Discourses, designed rather to Persuade than Prove, in comparison of those Arguments, that are suggested by a due Consideration of the Nature of the Thing. But yet, I presume, you will readily give me leave to do that frequently enough, which your Friend, perhaps, will call Preaching. For
be-

besides that, your Desires, and my Haste, confine me to the Bible and my own Thoughts; the frequent Citation of Texts of Holy Scripture is exacted by the Nature of the Question I am to handle: it being necessary, for the evincing of the Doctrines of Christianity, not to be inconsistent with *Greatness of Mind*, that we *as* well consider, What those Doctrines are, which sure will be best declared by the Scriptural Texts that contain them, *as* What are the Attributes of *Greatness of Mind*.

CHAP. I.

TO proceed then with some Method, as well as much Brevity, I conceive, it will be no unfit Way to come to a Resolution in our Inquiry, if I *First* set down and enumerate the chiefest Things, that, in the estimation of Intelligent Men, do, as if they were so many Ingredients, make up what we call *Magnanimity* or *Greatness of Mind*, That not being a single Starr, but a Constellation of elevated and radiant Qualities; and *then* shew, that Religion, especially That of the Christians, is, at least, *consistent with* each of these, if it do not also *promote* it. But in this Enumeration, tho I shall, *ex abundanti*, take in some Qualities, that are not Essential to *Greatness of Mind*, but rather Accessions to it; yet I shall not scrupulously distinguish those Things that are necessary to compleat it, and Those that are partly some of them
Signs,

Signs, and some of them Effects of it; hoping from your Equity, that these additional Things will be thought to make full amends, if, through Haste or Mistake, I should chance to have omitted any Property, that you may judge to belong to the true Notion of Generosity.

I shall, in the following Discourse, take it for granted, (and I hope I need not tell you, that I do so) that as we think not Masons, but Jewelers, fit to judge of the Genuineness and Value of precious Stones; so you will allow me to take the Notion and Measures of *Greatness of Mind*, not from the Opinions of the Injudicious Vulgar, but the Judicious Estimates of Reason, improv'd by Philosophy, and enlightn'd by Natural Theology.

I know, the undiscerning Multitude, whose Judgment seems rather lodg'd in the Eye than in the Brain, when they hear Men name *Greatness of Mind*, are apt to fancy Something, that, like the Coronation of a King, is attended with Pomp and Splendor,

and a numerous Train of Gazers, and the loud Acclamations of the People. And, at least, when mention is made of an Heroick Soul, they imagine, that it cannot be but in a great Commander, like a *Roman* Emperor, or a *Tartarian* General, that leads and defeats Armies, and desolates whole Countries, and leaves them Peopled only with Carcasses. But Reason and Religion, that look on Human things with Eyes untroubled by those pompous Outsides that dazzle the Vulgar, can easily see a vast Difference betwixt *Greatness of Fortune* and *Greatness of Mind*. And not only Christianity teaches, that God, who is no *Περσπολίτης* Respector of Persons, *Acts* 10. and 34. 2 *Sam.* 14. and 14. *Sees not Persons as Man sees them*; and that a thing that is sublime amongst Men, may be an Abomination to Him: But Philosophers themselves can easily distinguish betwixt that real *Greatness*, that truly belongs to the Man, and that Theatrical one, that Fortune may have an-

next

next to his Condition. And, *tho* they pay a peculiar Honor and Respect to great Virtue in Sovereigns, rather than in Subjects, because in the former, 'tis more diffusively beneficial, and cannot last without resisting stronger Temptations; *yet*, they do not think, that a great Empire always either finds, or makes, a great Soul. And if Dignities, how high soever, be attain'd by mean Submissions, or weak Actions, they think this extrinsecal Greatness can no more make a mean Soul *Great*, than high Stilts can make a Dwarf a proper Man. Perhaps, they look upon Many, who, for making a great Bustle and Noise in the World, are, by themselves, and the shallow Vulgar, thought great Spirits, but as Gnats, that are in themselves small and worthless Creatures, and are really considerable for Nothing, save the Noise and the Stings wherewith they are able to disturb Mens Rest. That lucky Monarch, that overcame so great a Part of the then known World, and conquer'd

Countrys

Countrys, faster than one would have thought he could have travell'd over them, has this Character given of his stupendious Exploits, by the *Roman* Historian, that all he had done, was, *That he durst well despise despicable things.* And in a Poet of the same Nation, this is his Elogy,

*Felix Terrarum Prædo non utile mundo,
Editus Exemplum.*

And if such Persons as They, had so little Respect for so great a Monarch, that was a lawful Sovereign; what Liberty, think you, do Philosophers allow themselves, who so little value the Favourites of Fortune, for their being so that even such as those prosperous Usurpers, *Phocas*, &c. that her Fondness, and the Applause of a Multitude, (as blind, perhaps, as She is painted) have seated in the Throne; Philosophers, in their Thoughts, do as well doom to a Scaffold, as Religion does to Hell. And certainly, True Greatness of Mind must

must be something that both Resides in the Soul, and is Perfective of it; neither of which Properties belong to any thing that Fortune can bestow: and all that outward *Greatness* can do, is not to make a Soul Great, but to afford one that is, the opportunity of shewing itself to be so. And all these Submissions and Respects that Custom, or Fear, or Interest make Men pay to those, whom, only their Titles, or their Places, or their Power makes Great ones, do as little argue or increase the real worth of those envied Persons, as the standing for more than formerly in an account, turns a Brass Counter into Silver or Gold. And as no less skill in Arithmetick is requir'd, to Multiply, &c. a thousand Farthings than a thousand Guinea's, tho' one of the latter, be worth almost a thousand of the former; so the ordering or disposing of all things according to the best Rules, and after the best manner they are capable of, may argue no less *Greatness of Mind* in a private Man, than is exercis'd

ercis'd by a Great Monarch, in those Actions that attract the Eyes, and busie the Tongues, of Nations. And as it usually speaks a Man a better Artist to make a Pocket-Watch, than a great Town-Clock, all the Advantage the later has of the former, consisting in the Greatness of the Matter that is wrought, and not that of the Skill, that is display'd: So it sometimes happens, that those Productions of Virtue argue a greater Soul, that make, by far, a lesser Shew and Noise. And you may remember, not only, that *Socrates*, notwithstanding his private, and even necessitous, Condition, was by the Oracle preferr'd to all the *Grecians*, when *Greece* was the Theatre of generous Minds: But, that a far truer Oracle than That of *Delphos*, pronounc'd the poor Widows Mind, and Circumstances, to have made her Mite a greater Liberality, than all that the Rich Man had bestow'd upon the Corban. And it is the Sentence

Mark XII. 43.

Sentence of no worse a Judge than *Salomon*. *Prov. XVI. 32.*

Let us not then from the mean Notions of the Vulgar, and the fond Opinions of common Souls, take our Estimates of so sublime and extraordinary a Quality, as *Greatness of Mind*. For many Things, to which they give not only their Approbation, but their Applause, are, and ought to be, as little esteem'd, if they be condemn'd by the Wise, as a piece of Brass Money, that has long past current among the People, ought to be thought good Gold, when Refiners and Say-masters have declar'd it counterfeit. And if you ask me, What Notion then of *Greatness of Mind*, I am willing to allow, I shall freely tell you, that, in my apprehension, the Man that has a *Great Mind*, is he that uses his utmost moral Diligence to find out what are the best Things he can do, and then, without being deterr'd by Dangers, or discourag'd by Difficulties, does resolutely and steadily pursue them as far as his Ability

lity and Opportunities will serve; and This out of an Internal Principle of Love to God and Man, and with a sincere Aim, to Glorify the one, and Benefit the other.

C H A P. II.

BUT, before I descend to Particulars, it will not be amiss to take notice of one Consideration, that may, in general, make it probable, That the Christian Religion is rather favourable, than opposite, to true Magnanimity. That this Argument may make somewhat the more Impression, I shall, tho' very briefly, observe that the Aspects, both of the Author, the Rules, the Aims, or Scopes, and the Rewards of Virtue, as 'tis recommended by Christianity, have a great and direct tendency to Elevate it, and make it Heroick.

And

And *first*, the prime Author of the Doctrine of the Gospel being GOD himself, who both knows Man perfectly, and is mentioned in Scripture as a *φιλοφρονος*, or Lover of Mankind; 'tis but *Tit. III. 4.* reasonable to suppose, that the Doctrines and Laws he caused to be solemnly delivered to Mankind, and confirmed by Miracles, and whose System is, in the *Apocalypse*, honoured with the Title of *The Revel. XIV. 6.* *Everlasting Gospel*, (i.e.) not to be succeeded by a more perfect Institution, as the Mosaick Law was by That; should be fitted to beget and advance solid and sublime Virtue, and be more, than any other Institution, Perfective of Human Nature.

Next, the Rules, and (if there be any such) the Counsels of the Christian Religion require, and tend to, extraordinary degrees of Virtue: The Divine Legislator, being able to look into the Hearts of Men, makes his
Laws

Laws reach Those, and Those principally, too. The *loving GOD with all our Hearts, with all our Minds, &c. and our Neighbour as our selves*, as comprehensive as those two grand Principles of Virtue are, is by our Saviour made the Summary of the Moral Law, and adopted into the Gospel; the *cleansing ourselves from all Filthiness, both of Flesh*
2 Cor. VII. 1. and Spirit; and the ab-
1 Theff. V. 22. staining from all kind, or
appearance, of Evil, are the Negative Parts of the Christians Duty; and for the Positive Parts, we are plainly told, That *unless our Righteousness exceed that* boasted one of the
Matth. V. 20. Scribes and Pharisees, we
shall not enter into the
Kingdom of Heaven. We are urged to grow in Grace, to add
2 Pet. III. 18. to our Faith, Virtue, and
I. 5. to That, a whole Train of excellent Qualities. And, for fear any such thing should be thought to be purposely omitted, because left unmentioned, this general Exhortation

tion is given us; *Finally,*
my Brethren, whatsoever Phil. IV. 8.
things are true, &c. But

there is yet a more aspiring Path of
 Virtue trac'd us out in the Gospel,
 where it proposes to us the Example
 of Christ, as One, whose Steps we
 are to tread in: For not only that
 Divine Person never com-

mitted any Sin, neither was 1 Pet. II. 22.
 Guile found in his Mouth;

but the Supreme and Omniscient
 Judge, God Himselfe, Declared, by a
 Voice from Heaven, his full Approba-
 tion both of his Person and his Do-
 ctrine, when he said, *This*

is my beloved Son, in whom Mat. XVII. 5.

I am well pleased, hear he

him. And his Sinless Life, which
 was a Living Law, did not only sur-
 pass the Examples, but even the Pre-
 cepts and the Idea's too, of the Hea-
 then Moralists and Philosophers, as
 may be elsewhere shewn. And the
 becoming a serious Disciple of so
 Perfect and Divine a Teacher, does
 itself so engage a Man to renounce

B

his

his former Vices, that
Rom. XIII. 14. when *St. Paul* had dis-
 suaded his *Romans* from
 divers other Vices, instead of exhort-
 ing them to the contrary Virtues in
 particular, he only desires them, in
 general, to put on the Lord *Jesus*
Christ, as a comprehensive Durty,
 which contain'd in it all the Virtues,
 he declin'd to enumerate.

Thirdly, but tho' he calls us to high
 Degrees of Virtue, yet he does not
 to Unattainable ones; For, tho' Phi-
 losophy wisely forbore, tho' not al-
 ways to commend, yet to injoyn,
 things disproportionate to Human
 Infirmities; yet, he may well be al-
 low'd to engage us to more than Hu-
 man Virtues, that by his Divine As-
 sistances, if they be duly sought, is
 always ready to enable us to acquire
 and practise Them. Of

Jo'n I. 16.

his *Fulness*, says *St. John*,
We have all received, and
Grace for Grace; (i. e.) either Graces
 answerable to His, as the Faculties of
 a Child's Mind, are to Those of a
 Perfect

Perfect Man; or, *Grace upon Graces*
(i.e.) an Accumulation of Graces
heaped upon one another; which may
keep you from wondring, that *St.*
Paul should dare to say,

That he could do all things *Phil. IV. 13.*

thorow Christ that strength-
ned him. And where his Invitations

meet with an honest and a willing
Mind, his Commands do not only
Chaulk out the Way, but Give
Strength to walk in it; and he usu-
ally, does by his Spirit, such a kind of
Work, as he sometimes did miracu-
lously by his Power,

when he at once bid, *Matt. 9. 6.*

and enabled, a Paraly-
tick Person that wanted Strength to
stir from his Bed, to rise and walk.

And when, having commanded *St.*
Peter to walk to him upon

the Sea, he enabled him se- *Mat. XIV. 29.*
curely to tread upon the

Waves; thereby Approving and Re-
warding the excellent Notion that
Disciple had, That the Command
of *Christ* was a sufficient Cause to

put him upon Action, tho a Miracle were requisite to carry him thorow with it.

Fourthly, The Rewards propos'd to Virtue and Piety, by the *Christian Religion*, do exceedingly tend to animate and heighten Them ; whether we consider the Recompences the Gospel propounds in this Life, or those that it promises in the Next. The great present Rewards of Virtue, are, you know, the Approbation of Good Men, and the Applause of a Man's own Conscience. The First of these is as well attainable by Christian Hero's, as by any other ; for Virtue loses neither its Worth, nor Amiableness, by being Baptiz'd ; and tho in some Times and Places lesser Degrees of it may be disregarded, or traduc'd, yet, generally speaking, the greater Degrees of it will either invite, or extort, Mens Esteem. Among the *Roman* Persecutors, the exemplary Lives and Constancy of the Primitive Christians, brought it to be Proverbially said,

said, *That such a Man was a good Man, saving that he was a Christian;* and, *Soli Christiani mortis contemptores*, was usually in Heathen's Mouths. There are divers Qualities, and those more press'd by the Christian, than any other, Institution, that have in them so much of Native Loveliness, that *St. Paul* might justly say of them, *That he that exercises himself in them, is, generally speaking, both* Rom. XIV. 18. *ceptable to God, and approv'd by Men.* Nor did those Virtues that recommended the Great *Constantine*, whilst he was a Gentile, lose their Lustre, or the Veneration they procured him, when he turn'd Christian, and practis'd them with higher Aims, than that of satisfying Himself, and pleasing his People.

And as for the Reward of a good Conscience, which was able to make *Hercules* undergo all his Labors; and made all the other Hero's of the Gentile World; I think, it will not be

doubted, but that this inward Recompence is received, not only without any Defalcations, but with great Improvements, by him, whose Virtues flow from Religion. For, to him the Applauses of Conscience may well be more acceptable than all the various sorts of Musick, that Solemniz'd the Dedication

Dan. III. 7.

of *Nebuchadnezzar's* Golden Image, since in him

Conscience does not, as in mere Natural Men, act only the Part of a Domestick Judge, but That of a Delegate from God himself; and its Absolutions are less welcome, as they are Approbations of Reason, than as they are the Pledges of Gods Acceptance, and of that higher Reward that will be consequent to it in the Life to come.

For these Joys, that are plac'd on the other side of the Grave, are much the Noblest part of the Recompence of Virtue, and proportionable Incitements to the Practice of it; and yet, on the account of future Rewards,

wards, the Christian has much greater Motives to Heroick Virtue, than the Heathen Moralist, or Philosopher. For, the posthume State of Man is so dim and uncertain, that we find even the greatest Men, among the Heathens, speak very doubtfully, and not without Ifs and Ands, of a future State, and much more of a future Happiness, as may be instanc'd in *Socrates*, *Cyrus*, *Seneca*, and many others; so that they rather seem'd to have Wish'd, or Hop'd, than Believ'd, their future Felicity: And, I fear, that many of them, finding that happy State describ'd chiefly by the Poets, reckon'd it among Poetick Fictions. And those that did, though but waveringly, expect Recompences in the Life to Come, had but poor and mean Idea's suggested to them of it; the Hopes they were entertain'd with, being of Fortunate Islands and the Elysian Fields, which are not so Transcendent as to make a diffident Man very forward to quit the Gar-

dens of *Epicurus*, that he has here
 in Possession, upon the doubtful
 hopes of other Gardens in *Elysium*.
 Whereas, to excite the Christian to
 an Heroick Degree of Virtue, he is
 not allow'd to Hope, but Comman-
 ded to be intirely Confident of passing
 out of this World into a Place, to
 which the Poets *Elysium* is much
 more Inferior, than the Possession of
 a Garden is to That of an Empire.
 To attempt the Description of that
 Cœlestial Happiness, would be, con-
 trary to my Inclination, to launch
 out into a Common Place; and were
 a Work, that if my Haste did not,
 my Disability would, dissuade me
 from: And therefore, *though* it be a
 State made up of the Confluence of
 all sort of Things rationally De-
 fireable; *yet*, having only said in
 general of all the other Goods that it
 comprizes, that the Scripture tells
 us, *That Eye has not Seen, nor Ear*
Heard, nor the Heart of
Man Conceiv'd, what God
has laid up for them that
Fear

1 Cor. II. 9.

Fear him: I shall particularly take notice only of those Parts of this Inestimable Reward, that may peculiarly concern my present purpose, by being the chief Things that Heroick Souls are wont to Aspire too; a Good Name, Honour, and Dignity.

To have a Good Name for Good Actions, cannot but be a very desirable Thing, the Applause of Wise and Good Men, being a loud Eccho from without, that, by repeating it, confirms the Approbation given by the Conscience within. But though to do Virtuous and Worthy Actions be the best and likeliest way of acquiring a Good Name; yet 'tis not a certain one: For, such is the Ignorance, the Malice, or the Enmity of a great many, that no Man is sure to escape being Mis-represented, or Traduc'd; as, we see, that the Sublimity, the Brightness, and the regular Courses of the Stars themselves, could not hinder wanton Poets, or fanciful Astronomers, from giving those Luminous Constellations the Names not only
of

of the Nobler Beasts, as the Lyon, the Eagle, and the Whale; but even of Animals that lie under an ill Name, as the Dog, the Goat, and the Scorpion. And though it be true, that oftentimes Innocency long Clouded, does, like Lightning, break out at last; yet oftentimes too, that happens not till Malice and Envy are Dead, because the maligned Person is so; by which means he does not Live to know he is justified; and many, if not all, of those mis-inform'd Men are Dead and gone for whose good Opinion he was chiefly concern'd. But *though* the Christian may, as well as any other, be Traduc'd by Calumny, which often serves good Men, (as the Heathen Persecuters did the Martyrs, when they expos'd them to the Peoples view, cloath'd in the Skins of Beasts, to make them hideous and hateful;) yet he is justly cheared by the Assurance he has, that there will come a Time when oppress'd and disfigur'd Innocency shall shine forth and triumph,

umph, and his good Name, as well
 as his Body, shall have a Glorious
 Resurrection, even in the Sight of
 his Accusers and Enemies, and of
 all those whom their Slanders did
 either prevail with, or startle. For
 at that great and general Assize,
 to which there shall be a far greater
 Confluence, than the *As-*
syrian Monarch drew to *Dan. III.*
 the Plains of *Babylon*, the
 Heroick Disciples of the Apostles
 will be able to say, upon happier
 terms than the Apo-
 stles themselves did *1 Cor. IV. 9.*
 here below, that they
 are made a *Spectacle to God, to An-*
gels and to Men. And in that Il-
 lustrious Assembly, of
 the *First Born, whose* *Heb. XII. 2, 3.*
Names are written in
Heaven, being present, the Men, not
 only of all Nations, but of all Ages
 too, the Vizards shall be as well
 taken off, as the Masques; and
 the formerly traduc'd Saints, be-
 ing welcom'd with the Title of
 Good

Good and Faithful Ser-
vants, shall solemnly be
 acquitted by the Sentence, not of a
 Fallible, or partial, Judge, but of an
 Infinite and Supreme
Jer. XVII. 10. One, That searches the
Hearts and Reins, and
cannot be Deceiv'd or Brib'd; and, to
 be sure, that the injur'd Saint shall
 come off with Honour enough, he
 shall then be Absolv'd by being
 Crown'd.

This Celestial Crown compre-
 hending, in the Scripture Dialect, both
 the remaining Parts of the Christi-
 ans Reward, Honour and Dignity,
 or Glory, and Preferment; it will
 be pertinent to mention some Advan-
 tages that give it an high Preference
 about the Crowns of Monarchs here
 below.

And First, Earthly Crowns may
 somtimes be the Fruits and Recom-
 pences of Worth and Virtue, but
 are not at all the proofs of them.
 They are usually the Gifts of Na-
 ture, and, not unfrequently, of For-
 tune ;

tune; and History gives us cause to wish, they were more seldom the Acquits of Crimes. But the Celestial Crowns proclaim, tho' not the Merit, the Worth of them that receive them, being never adjudg'd but to Such, whom previous Graces and Virtues have fitted and qualified for the Inheritance of the Saints in Light. Col. I. 12.

Besides, as an Earthly Crown may be acquir'd without Merit, so it may be possess'd without Happiness. And if Crimes be made Steps to a Throne, they prove so many Thorns to him that sits on it, who is there a more Illustrious, not a less tormented, Malefactor. The Sublimity of a Throne, as little as the Height of a Scaffold, keeping a Criminal Person from feeling the punishments inflicted on him there. As may appear by the instance of Herod Agrippa, Acts XII. 21. whose Throne, and glistening Habit, which Josephus takes notice of, tho' they procur'd him,

him not only the Acclamations, but Adorations, of the dazled Multitude, could not protect him from the incens'd Justice of an higher King than he; so that whilst others treated him as a God, he found himself one of the most miserable of Men, and was fain to hasten from a Seat, which occasion'd, but could not protect, his Impiety. But a Cœlestial Crown, as it is graciously bestowed for the Supream Recompence of Virtue, and on that account may be called a *Crown of Righteousness*; so it always proves a Blessing, as inseparable from Happiness, as a Thing is from it self. The Crowns of this World, by the very advantage of being Hereditary, shew, that they cannot preserve the Possessors from Death. But the Crown, I speak of, is by the Divine Bestower of it, called, *A Crown of Life*; and of it, in respect of other Crowns, may be truly said, what *Solomon* said of Wisdom, in reference to other Goods,

Rev. II. 10.

Goods, That *the Excellency of it is, that it* Eccl. VII. 12.
gives Life to the owner

thereof. And though Earthly Crowns be such Transitory Things, that we may observe, that even

the Four great Monar- Dan. II.
 chies of the World were

by God represented to *Nebuchadnezar*, but as parts of a Dream, whereas the Kingdom promis'd to Christians, is called in the Scripture, *A*

Kingdom that cannot be Heb. XII. 28.
moved, as the Believers

Crown is, in opposition to those fading Crowns of Lawrel, that adorn'd the Heads of the Roman Conquerors, called an *unwi-*

thering Crown of Glory: 1 Pet. V. 4.

As if the Lawrel plac'd on the Christians Head, could grow and flourish in the Wreath, better than it did on the Tree.

But all that I have yet said is Inferior to this last Prerogative of the Cœlestial Crown, that it does not only confer a relative Dignity or
 Pre-

Preeminence, but an essential Worth and Excellency ; as if the Diamonds, which adorn'd that Crown, should impart their own Sparklingness, Transparency, and Incorruptibility, to the Person that wears it. The highest Preferments here below do raise a Man above others, without raising him above himself. By being at the top of a Ladder, a Man comes to an higher Station, but is not really taller than he was ; and a Vane, by being plac'd on the top of the highest Steeple, is not from Iron turn'd into Gold or Silver, but remains still of the same base Metal it was, and is but a Weather-Cock, and so the Sport of the Winds. But a Cœlestial Crown is always attended with a Personal Improvement, befitting so high a Dignity. The Heavenly Coronation has a Virtue like That of the Unction of *Saul*, who, upon his being made King, was enabled to *Prophecy*, and was turn'd into another Man.

1 Sam. X. 6.

And the Resemblance holds in this too,

too, that Christ is said,
to have made his Re- *Rev. i. 6.*
deemed ones, not only

Kings, but Priests to God and his Fa-
ther, as if the Kingly Dignity were
not enough, unless the Sacred Cha-
racter of a Priestly Office were ad-
ded. Congruously to which, *St. Pe-*
ter calls *Christians*, in ge-
neral, a *Royal Priest-* *1 Pet. II. 9.*
hood; the Understand-

ing, the Will, the Affections, are
all refin'd and elevated; and the ve-
ry Body itself is transformed into a
Spiritual Body. As if the Glorify'd
Soul did shine, with an undiminish'd
Splendor, through its happily chang'd
Mansion. And we may well suppose,
that this will be a Bright and Noble
Structure, if we remember, that the
Angels, who, in their Apparitions to
good Men, were wont to be very
careful not to frighten them, did yet
appear with a Majestick Splendor;
and that Angel that the
Apostles saw in our Sa-
viours Sepulchre is re-

Mark XVI. 5.

C

presented

presented, as a young Man cloathed
in a long white and shi-
ning Garment. And we

Luke XXIV. 4. are told by *St. Paul*, that,
 in the future State,

Phil. III. 21. *our vile Bodies shall be*
transform'd into the
likeness of his Glorious Body; and

how Glorious it is in Heaven, we may
 guess, by what it was at his Trans-
 figuration here on Earth, during
 which, the Scripture relates, *That*

his Face did shine as the
Matt. XVII. 2. *Sun, and his Raiment*
was white as the Light.

And of *Moses* and *Elias*, thô they
 came to speak to him of his Death,

'tis added by *St. Luke*,
Luke IX. 31. *That they also appear'd*
in Glory. And since

our Saviour has assured us, *That those*
shall be accounted worthy
Matt. XXII. 30. *of that State, shall be*

like, or equal to the An-
 gels; And that then the
Mat. 13. 43. *Righteous shall shine*

like the Sun in the King-
dom

dom of their Father, who knows, but that the Transfigur'd Soul and Body of some happy Saint may be as Glorious a Sight, as that which appear'd to *St. John* in the Apocalyps, when he saw an Angel

standing in the Sun? If *Rev. XIX. 17.*

it be said, that these are

very bold *Hyperbolies*, I hope the Texts, I have mention'd, will keep them from seeming altogether groundless Conceits. And, when a-

mong other excellent Prerogatives, that our Saviour promises the persevering Beleivers, One is, *That he will give them Power*

over the Nations, and *Rev. II. 26, 27*

to Rule them with a

Rod of Iron; and the Other, which may well be the last, is exprest in these words. *To him that overcometh, will I grant to sit*

with me in my Throne, *Rev. 3. 21.*

even as I evercame, and

am set down with my Father in his Throne. And tho I readily yield,

that these Expressions are not to be

strictly, and literally, taken; yet, when I consider the infinite Power, and Goodness, of God; and that, for ought we know, he may have numberless Dominions, and Setts of Governable Creatures, that we are yet strangers too; I think, God's Attributes, and Christ's Expressions, may warrant us to expect amazing things from him that is Able, and has Declar'd himself Willing, to do for us

above what we can ask, or,
Eph. 3. 20. in our present State, so much as *think*. And, at

least, that will be allow'd me, which I drive at in this Celebration of our future Happiness, that the Christian Religion, by proposing such inestimable Rewards, presents Believers with far higher Motives to Heroick Virtue, than Morality, or Philosophy, can afford other Men.

Advertisement.

THe Author being desir'd to add yet something to the foregoing Discourses, to give the Book they make Parts of, a Thickness more proportionate to its Largeness; he did among other Papers of his, that he turn'd over in Compliance with that request, light upon an Epistolary Discourse, which by its very being unfinish'd, seem'd (by reason of its shortness) the more fit to serve the present turn. For this Treatise having been drawn up in a Countrey, whence the Author was oblig'd to remove, before he had made any considerable Progress in his Work; he was easily induc'd to put it up in a Bundle of other Writings, which, like this, were laid aside till he should be at much leisure to compleat them. But upon the newly mention'd occasion, finding that among divers loose and lesser Memoirs, that had been thrown together

in order to the design'd Treatise, there were 15 or 20 Pages at the beginning that were Coherent enough; he was content they should attend the Christian Virtuoso, because of the affinity of the things design'd in both the Papers; which being to recommend the Christian Religion to worthy Souls, 'twas congruous enough that a Discourse which shews, That the Christian Religion may very well consist with a Philosophick Genius; should be accompany'd by another that tends to manifest, That Greatness of Mind, which comprizes uncommon degrees of Virtue, is not only Consistent with Christianity, but may be highly Promoted by it. Those that reflect on this Aim, will not ('tis hop'd) think it strange, that the Style is a little Rais'd; since tho' the Subject be Theological, yet the Writer, (who was then many Years Younger than he now is) being a Person of Honour, and writing for a Noble Gentleman, who, like himself, was a Layman; 'twas thought not only Allowable but Fit, that the Style should not be altogether unsuitable

suitable to the Subject and to the Aim: which was to make Impressions on an Illustrious Person, not by dry Precepts, or Languid Discourses, but by exciting him to Heroick Virtue, by the Noblest Patterns and Ideas, and the most moving Incentives, he could propose.

And tho' the Discouragements lately mention'd, and since increas'd by the Authors not being able to find some of the principle Materials he had, in loose Sheets, provided for the following Discourse; oblige him to lay aside the thoughts of Compleating it; yet because 'tis very possible that some Elevated Soul may have a Mind to prosecute the design, or Cultivate so noble a Subject; he thought it not amiss (as little Samples of his Method or Way of Treating it) to Subjoyn to the greater Fragment, besides the Index of the Heads of Discourse, intended for the First Part, 5 or 6 Lesser Fragments that he lighted on, whilst he was seeking for some Papers belonging to the same Tract, that should have been, but were not, found in their Company.

C H A P. III.

First Frag-
ment.

TO have high Aims and Noble Designs, is so Genuin a Mark, and Effect of Greatness of Mind, that there is not any more generally acknowledged ; insomuch that Ambition, tho' it be but a Depravation or a Counterfeit of this Heroick frame of Mind, does yet so dazzle the Eyes of the greater part of Men, as to pass for Magnanimity ; and Noble Attempts do ostentimes, even when they fail of Success, not miss of Esteem.

— *Magnis tamen excidit ausis,*

was meant for an *Encomium* by him that said it. And I remember that one of the Ancients reckons it among the Glories of that Great Captain, *Hannibal*, who long successfully disputed, with the Romans, the Empire of the World, that he *resolved to*
Besiege

Besiege Rome, tho' he never prov'd able to lead his Army within the Sight of her Walls.

Now, as to have Elevated Aims is one of the chief Signs, and indeed Parts, of an Heroick temper of Mind ; so, there are no men that seem to me to have Nobler and Sublimer Aims, than Those to which a true Christian is Encouraged ; since he aspires to no less things than to *please and glorify God ; to promote the Good of Mankind ; to improve, as far as is possible, his Personal Excellencies in this Life ; and to secure to himself for ever a glorious and happy Condition in the next.*

C H A P. I V.

ONE of the grand Difficulties, *Second Fragment.* that he, who would be highly Virtuous, must expect to surmount and Conquer, especially in such a Degenerous age, as ours, is the Temptation that is afforded by the Uni-

Universality of vitious Customs and Examples. I wish 'twere needless, solicitously to prove, either how great an Influence Examples, especially bad ones, have on the generality of Men; or how general bad Examples have been in most Ages, and in particular in That we live in. The Scandal given by bad Examples, tho' it be one of the most obvious Temptations, is none of the least dangerous. For Interest, Bashfulness, and that very Complaisance and Civility, that is so usually found in well-bred, or good-Natur'd, Persons, makes them very unwilling to offend or disoblige the Company they live with; and whom they have several Inducements rather to please and gratify by imitation and compliance, than tacitly to reproach by Nonconformity to their Sentiments, and Practices. And, in effect, we find, that many that could not be perverted by the Frowns and Threats of the Vitious, have been Debauch'd by their Company and Example.

Against

Against this powerful Temptation, Religion strongly arms it's Hero, both by Precepts and Precedents. *Thou shalt not follow a Multitude to do Evil*, was the Express Command of the Mosaic Law. *Say not thou a Confederacy to all, to whom this People shall say a Confederacy*, was the Command of God to his Prophet. Our Saviour makes it an Argument to dissuade his Disciples from an anxious Solicitude about Meat and Drink and Cloathing, that after all *these things the Gentiles* (which are by far the most numerous part of Mankind) *do seek*. And, upon the same ground, he endeavours in the same Divine Sermon upon the Mount to keep them from Vain Repetitions in Prayer. And, whereas it may seem an Immodesty to dare to dissent from others, that vastly surpass us in number; the Heroick Conqueror of *Canaan* speaks thus to the whole Body of the Victorious Jewish Nation, that they may choose to serve whom they thought fit, and worship either
the

the Gods whom their Fathers served, or those Worshipp'd by the Neighbouring Nations, but as *for me and my House, we Will serve the Lord, Be you not conformed to this World,* says St. Paul. And another Apostle, speaking of himself and the true Christians of his time, scruples not to affirm it passionately and roundly, *We know* 1 John, 5. 9. *that we are of God, and the whole World lies in Wickedness.*

Nor does Religion furnish us with Precepts only, to disobey Custom, and Example, but with Precedents too, of which there are Three so illustrious, that I know not how to pass them by. The First is afforded by *Lot*, who lived in a place, that was grown so Proverbial for the Height of Wickedness, that to aggravate their Sins by the most Hyperbolical Comparison, we must liken them to themselves; and they were grown so wicked, that in a place where an admirable Plenty, and an unbounded Libertinisme could not but make them

them very populous, there could not be found half a Score of good Men, the generality of that cursed People being fallen so much not only from Virtue, but from common Honesty, that they did not restrain themselves so much, as to Human Vices. And yet, even the Sins of *Sodom*, which cryed so loud as to reach Heaven, and bring down Fire and Brimstone from thence, disturbed *Lor's* Quiet, without destroying his Innocence, and an Apostle assures us, that, that *just Man was but vex'd with the filthy Conversation of the wicked*, not prevail'd with in the least to imitate it.

The Next Instance of a Religious Courage, inflexible to bad Examples, is afforded us by the three Friends of *Daniel*, who, at the great Solemnity of the Dedication of *Nebuchadnezzar's* Golden Image; when they had, besides that great and stern Monarchs Command, the Example not only of many Men but many Nations, and a more numerous Assembly of Persons, confi-

considerable for Quality and Dignity, than the World ever saw before or since, singly opposed their Naked Constancy to the haughty Tyrants Menaces, and the prostrate World's Example. And yet these Men were Courtiers, bred among that supple sort of fine Creatures; that were as accustom'd to bow their Consciences, as their Knees, to their proud Master. They had not only Lives to lose, but the chief Dignities of the Province of *Babylon*, then the Queen of Nations. And they could not upon their refusal quit the stateliest Palace in the World, without immediately changing it for a burning Fiery Furnace.

The Last Instance I shall name, and the most illustrious that can be named, is, that I am supplied with by *Noah*, he lived in an Age, in which there were as many Hainous Sinners almost as there were Men, tho' Vice has generally had a *Benjamins* Portion, in the Distribution of Mankind betwixt It and Virtue, yet, *Methu-*
sala

Sala excepted, the Inequallity was grown such, as gave Vice rather a Monopoly than a Share of Men; or if a Distribution were to be admitted, 'twas such a one, as That made of *Saul* and his Army, when all the people were on one side, and only he and *Jonathan* on the other: 'Tis strange, that when the World was so recent, that many, that were then alive might remember and converse with one, that for two hundred Years liv'd contemporary with *Adam*, (for so we may gather *Methusala* to have done) Men should so soon forget all Sentiments of Piety. But yet in *Noah's* time, the World could not be compared to its present State, where thô it be Night in one place, 'tis Day in another; but to the state of *Tobu va Bohu*, or the first Chaos, where Darkness was over the face of the Universal Deep. For the Scripture tells us, *That all*
 Gen. 6. 12. *Flesh had corrupted his way upon the Earth, that every Imagination of the thoughts of Mans*

Mans Heart was only evil continually. And tho' *Noah's* Family were saved with him in the Ark, yet it may be doubted, whether that were a certain token of their being untoucht by the general Contagion. For that wonderful Vessel contain'd Beasts clean and unclean, harmless and rapacious, and in it were saved *Wolves* as well as *Lambs*, and *Vultures* as well as *Doves*. And where God gives the Reason, why he vouchsafed to receive *Noah* and his House into the Ark, he Expresses it thus; *For thee have I seen Righteous before me in this Generation*, without making mention of any of his Family. Nor, was the Wickedness of the Antediluvian World more Universal than it was Great; that Mungrel breed were guilty of Sins as Gigantic as Themselves. The Text says, *that the Earth was filled with Violence* through them; and those Impious Rebels against their Maker broke the Laws of Nature with an Insolence, that provoked him to break off the course of
of

of Nature to punish them, since nothing less than an Universal Deluge of Water could place Limits to such an impetuous and over-flowing Impiety. But all these sinful Examples, how general soever, could not prevail on *Noah* so much as to keep him from giving One of a quite contrary Nature; the Scripture calls him an Herald or *Preacher of Righteousness*; and tho' it appears not, that he made any Converts, he persever'd in his rejected Admonitions for Sixscore years, a time long enough to have tired his Patience, especially since he did not any of his Hearers Obstinacy. And his Constancy rais'd him as much above the reach of their Temptations, as the Waters that punished their Sin rais'd his Ark above their drowned Mansions. And now go and compare with any Constancy of the following times, where Virtue has always had some Party, tho' not a numerous one, this unequal'd Singularity of *Noah*, which God himself seems to have taken special

D notice

Gen. 7. 1.

notice of, not only by that Patriarchs wonderful Preservation, but by saying Emphatically, *Thee* have I seen Righteous before me in *this Generation*, which was so brutish and depraved, that I know not whether he were not obliged to live among worse Brutes before he finish'd the Ark than afterwards, when in it he was shut up with Lyons, Foxes, and Tygres.

Third Fragment.

Another Virtue, that belongs to a great Mind, is Constancy, or persevering Patience in Afflictions. This Quality hath so Noble an appearance, that when 'tis exercis'd even by Malefactors, it obtains our Esteem; and whilst we cannot so much as excuse their Actions, we cannot but commend the Manner of their suffering for them: Calmness of Mind, in the midst of outward Storms, being something that looks so handsomely, that Crimes and Gibbets cannot keep it from doing so; nor hinder those in whom 'tis found, from

from being both pitied and applauded.

That this part of Greatness of Mind is befriended by the Christian Religion, more than by any other Institution, will appear; if we consider, what it contributes to Constancy and Patience, under outward Pressures and Calamities, by *Precept*, by *Examples*, and by *Arguments*.

C H A P. V.

Humility is a Virtue, that, at the first blush, seems so distant from Greatness of Mind, that some would think it improper to refer the Former to the Later, under any other Notion, than that of an Opposite. But, whatever may be thought of Humility, solitarily consider'd, yet, when we find it in Conjunction with those other Qualities, that contribute to make up Greatness of Mind, it adds to their Number; and,

Fourth Fragment.

tho' it does not perhaps shine as bright as some of them, is as amiable as any ; and imparts somewhat of its own Loveliness to all the rest. And you will not much wonder, that I place this Virtue among those that Constellate, if I may so speak, an Heroick Mind, if you consider, whence Humility may in such a Soul proceed, and what difficulties it may surmount. For if Wealth, Honour, and other outward Blessings exalt our *Hero's* Condition ; to be Humble, in the midst of such Advantages, argues a Mind elevated above the Presents of Fortune, and speaks a Soul Great enough to undervalue those things that ordinary Souls admire ; and which even men that pass for Great, make the Objects of their Ambition, and, when attain'd, of their Pride. And if our *Hero* be ennobled with great Virtues, or famous for great Actions ; his Humility argues, that he has so rais'd an Idea of Virtue, and dares aspire to such a pitch of it, that he cannot rest satisfy'd with

with greater attainments, than Persons, but ordinarily Virtuous, aim at ; and looks upon himself as oblig'd and born to an unwearied pursuit of Heroick and still increasing Degrees of Excellency. And if a laudable Practice, by being extremely difficult, is a mark of a Great Soul, Humility must not be deny'd that Character ; for This is a Virtue more difficult to Excellent, than to Ordinary, Souls. In other Cases, a *Hero* is to contend but with his Vices, or his Passions, or his open Enemies ; but to be Humble, he must overcome his Virtues too ; and that, when they act unitedly as one Body : Since, tho' other Virtues naturally assist one another, they all conspire to ruin Humility ; which, having Pride to contend with, is to deal with so subtle an Adversary, that sometimes even by being foil'd he overcomes. And as the *Torpedo* poisons his Arm that wounds it ; so sometimes in the best Arguments we employ against Pride, the very strength and seeming suc-

cels of them, tempts the Maker of them to be Proud; and I will not swear, that, at this very time, I exalt our *Hero's* Humility, without any Diminution of my Own.

To the attainment of an Eminent degree of this lovely both Vertue, and Grace, the Gospel conduces, by furnishing its Embracers with *Express Injunctions*; clear *Directions*; high *Rewards*, and other weighty Motives; and the Noblest *Patterns* and Perfectest Examples, that ever were, or can be, given.

The

The Heads of the Discourse, Entitul'd
*Greatness of Mind, befriended by
 Christianity.*

The Introduction.

1. **O**F the true Notion of Great- Fifth Frag-
ment.
 ness of Mind.

2. Of the Tendency, that the Christian
 Religion has to promote Greatness of
 Mind in general.

3. That Christianity gives Men no-
 ble Aims, such as the glory of God, the
 pleasing of Him, the general Good of
 Men, Personal Excellencies in this
 World, and Eternal Happiness in the
 next.

The Virtues or Qualifications, which,
 as so many constituent Parts, make up
 Greatness of Mind, and are peculiarly
 befriended by Christianity; are chiefly
 These,

4. Courage or Valour.

5. Constancy and Patience in Affli-
 ctions.

D 4

6. Bounty

6. *Bounty or Liberality.*
 7. *Forwardness to oblige.*
 8. *Readiness to forgive.*
 9. *A just and impartial Estimate of Riches, and other Things that Ordinary Men covet and admire.*
 10. *Humility.*
 11. *A Contempt of all that's base.*
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The End of the First Part.

Greatness of Mind,
PROMOTED BY
CHRISTIANITY.

The Second Part.

THE former Discourse has, I hope, sufficiently manifested, That, of the several Virtues and Noble Qualities that make up true *Greatness of Mind*, there is not any that is not at least *consistent with Christianity*, and that most of them are eminently *promoted* by it. But I expect
your

Sixth Fragment.

your *Philédonos* will pretend, that there are some Qualities required by our Religion, that directly and powerfully tend to debase the Mind they possess ; and hinder it from attaining, or even aspiring, to such great Things as it would reach to, if it were not detain'd or depress'd by Religion. Let us now therefore examin, Whether, notwithstanding, the Wings which we have shewn that Religion adds to the Mind, the Cloggs that it fastens to her, be heavy enough to disable her to raise her self above the pitch of Vulgar Souls ; and force her, instead of soaring aloft, to flutter about the Earth.

The chief Things, that, as far as I can learn, are alleged, either by *Philédonus*, or more considering Adversaries than he ; to shew Religion to be either quite Inconsistent with, or very Unfriendly to, *Greatness of Mind*, are these.—

But, in regard that I find not the Answers that were drawn up to the Objections ; and 'tis not so convenient to
let

let the Later appear unaccompany'd by the Former, 'tis thought the safest Way to leave them both at present unmentioned; and only take notice, that to the Last of the Six Objections, which, to deal candidly, were named and considered, these words were found subjoyned.

And now, if it appear, that neither any nor all of these, have such an unfriendly Aspect on Greatness of Mind, as is pretended; and that at least the Impediments, they can bring, are much more than countervail'd by the Assistances that Religion affords Heroick Virtue; I hope it will appear, that Greatness of Mind is not incompatible with Christianity, but rather promoted by it.

FINIS.